critical digest

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This Week

Maxwell Anderson made plans to be represented this season by two new plays. The first The Golden Six will be presented Oct 13 at York by Warner LeRoy and Norman Twain, it takes place in 1 A.D. and concerns the 6 grandsons of Augustus. The second will be presented and directed on Broadway this spring by Guthrie McClintic and is entitled Madonna and Child. It is a new comedy set in present day NYC and will be presented in assoc-iaction with Playwrights Company.

Plays

Swim in the Sea due Sept 30 closed in Philadelphia and will not open in NY ...Howie closed after 5 performances, Look Back In Anger closed after 408 performances ...Goldilocks moved debut 2 days forward to Oct 11...Edwin Booth now due to open in NY Nov 17 instead of Dec 11...Tall Story pushed NY try to Jan 22 ...Love in Public a new play by John Crosby planned for Broadway this season by Alex Cohen... Moon Birds by Marcel Ayme to be presented in Jan by Leo Kerz, staged by Joseph Anthony.

Players

Neva Patterson signed for Make A Million...Jack Weston joins Crazy October... Susan Strasberg to play lead in Shadow of Gunman due Nov 19 at Bijou ...Lloyd Gough added to Cue for Passion Raymond Massey to co-star in J.B.... Wendy Craig of original London cast to repeat role in Epitaph for George Dillon ...John Napier, Al Leberfeld added to Far Away The Train Birds Cry due Dec 17.

Playhouses

Hayes Theatre will re-open Oct 2 with Helen Hayes starring in Touch of a Poet and will reveal its new Louix XIV decor. City Investing Company refurbishing plans include a mirror paneled lobby with white marble stairways, two smoking lounges in 18th century style and French lalique basket lights and crystal chandeliers.

Critics

A 30 foot mural by Al Hirschfeld portraying 30 NY critics and columnists near life-size will be featured at Playbill Restaurant, Hotel Manhattan, opening Oct 26.

Calendar

Jacknife-Royal 62 E 4-9/22. Sylvan Theatre Productions presents new comedy-drama written by Rock Anthony, directed by Byrne Piven...American Mime Theatre-Orpheum-126 Second Av 9/23. Joy Thomson-Michael Gardner present Paul Curtis troupe for 3 week stand... Heloise-Gate-162 Second Av 9/24. Gene Dingenary present new adaption of mediaeval tale by James Forsyth, staged by Nadine Miles...Lulu -4th St 83 E 4 - 9/29. David Ross presents and directs new adaption of Frank Wedekind play by Stephen Spender-Frances Faucett. With Eva Gabor, Clarence Derwent...Handful of Fire-Beck 10/1. David Susskind & Playwrights Company present new play by N. Richard Nash, staged by Robert Lewis, with Roddy McDowall, James Daly... A Touch of the Poet- Hayes 10/2. Producers Theatre presents Eugene O'Neill play, staged by Harold Clurman, with Helen Hayes, Eric Portman, Kim Stanley.

Theatre TV & Radio Notes

Fryer & Carr dropped plans to present 3 week pre-TV stage tour of Wonderful Town with Rosalind Russell...Sally Ann Howes, My Fair Lady, to portray lead in "Gift of Magi" new musical by her husband, Richard Adler, Dec 9 CBS-TV...Joseph Shipley, New Leader reviewer, to resume 11 55 PM WEVD-NY first night reviews.

Theatre Film Notes

Elizabeth Taylor to portray lead in Two For See Saw film to be made by 7 Arts Productions in late 1959.

Theatre Book Notes

"The Brute and Other Farces" by Chekhov translated by Eric Bentley and Theodore Hoffman published by Gove Press $1.45..."The Drama of Luigi Pirandello" by Domenico Vittorini published by Dover $1.98

Vaudeville

"Curtain Call" first Roxy stage show due Sept 26 to feature Jennie Smith, Evelyn Page..."Autumn Gallery" new Radio City Music Hall revue features Janet Scovatti, Jala Divigarde, Nancy Price.

Legal Dept

3 year pact signed by stage set builders and producers, averting a possible strike.

Off Broadway

First of 4 Arthur Laurents plays to be presented this season by Jack Ragotzy-Paul Michael-Gayle Hinckley will be The Time of the Cuckoo due Oct 23 at Sheridan Sq Playhouse with Kathleen Maguire in the leading role. Others to be presented include --A Clearing in the Woods, The Bird Cage and Home of the Brave.

Chapparal closed after 14 performances at Sheridan Sq Playhouse ...Jenny Lou Law replaces Jeanne Beauvais, Boy Friend... Florence Reed and Fritz Weaver to co-star in The Family Reunion Oct 20 at Phoenix ...William Swetland replaces Staats Cotsworth, The Golden Six... Hamlet of Stepney Green due Oct 27 at Cricket ...New adaption of Golem by Owen Rachleff to be presented Nov 10 at Orpheum by DorothyOlin-Paul Rickolt, to star and be directed by Ludwig Donath ...Musical version of Of Mice and Men by Ira Bilowit-Wilson Lehr-Alfred Brooks to be presented Dec 2 at Provincetown by Unicorn Productions.

Other Broadways

Nerissa Nickel and Robert McQuenny signed as understudies to Ruth Roman and Jeffrey Lynn in national company of Two for the See Saw...Shoestring Revue tour with best material from 3 Ben Bagley revues, staged by Bill Penn, to open in Fort Worth Sept30 , and then move to San Francisco...Margaret Truman in Autumn Crocus at Drury Lane, Chicago panned by critics.

Brussels Fair

Myron McCormick added to Time of Your Life with Franchot Tone at Fair Oct 8...Waiting for Godot by San Francisco Actors Workshop well received by Belgium critics.

Shakespeare

Romeo and Juliet picked by fans this summer at Stratford, Conn. as play they would like most to see next summer. Other plays selected by fans as favorites included--Twelfth Night, Merry Wives of Windsor, All's Well That End's Well.

London

Guests of Nation will be presented in London this fall with NY cast...London critics panned Auntie Mame as a poor play, but okayed Beatrice Lillie

DIGESTS OF CURRENT NYC THEATRE REVIEWS

Howie- 46th St.9/17-9/20. 3 pros-Herald Tribune, Mirror, World Telegram & Sun- and 4 cons- Times, News, Post, Journal American-filed on Phoebe Ephron's comedy presented by Playwrights Company and Slevin-Gerstad, John Gerstad director. Play closed after 5 performances. All views were on mild side. Affirmative voters billed it as pleasant well acted , while negative voters all found some amusing moments, but not enough for a full evening. Whittaker, subbing for Kerr, Herald Tribune, approved it as quiet, pleasant well acted small comedy. Coleman, Mirror, enjoyed it as pleasant laugh fare, but doubted if it would be a hit. Aston, WTS, liked results but found many trying moments. All approved cast headed by Albert Salmi, Patricia Smith. Con views headed by Atkinson, Times, who billed it as a cheerful, machine-stitched comedy, competently written, brightly staged, but one that becomes boring. Times man enjoyed only third act, while News reviewer enjoyed only first act. Journal American critic enjoyed second act only. Watts, Post, marked it as a harmless mediocre effort. Journal American audience poll voted 4 pros, 1 con.

The Young Provincials- Cricket-162 Second 9/18. 7 cons filed on Ben Levinson's new play, directed and produced by the author. Most notices were on the harsh side, one critic left after first act, another after second. Atkinson, Times, panned current effort of author as obnoxiously dull with callow acting. Looking into records Times aisle-sitter found that Levinson's previous plays on Broadway in 1940 and 1942 were also panned. The author seems to have some sort of compulsion, oh that he could resist it, concluded Atkinson, who left after second act of Cricket production. Gleason, Herald Tribune, also panned play as having as much bounce and sparkle as kindergarten modeling clay, swarmed with , and as for the acting he has seen better performances on the stage of the Mingo Junction Grange Hall. McHarry, News, who left after first act, just wonders that the landlord let cast and author into theatre. Coleman, Mirror , ,noted that author took interesting idea, and didn't do a thing with it. McClain, Journal American, was sole critic to like cast which included Jonnie Mortin and James Gore, but otherwise panned script as wordy and dull. Herridge, Post, listed it all as incredibly immature. Aston, World Telegram & Sun, liked the final scenes, but these were hardly enough to make up for the rest of the doings.

Talent '58- Majestic 9/16. Times, News and World Telegram-Sun reviewers applauded single showcase matinee performance of 100 entertainers presented for producers and agents by Broadway Show League. Times reviewer singled out Diane Shalet, William Woodson, Shirley Blanc, Rosetta LeNoire, Barbara Wright and Lenny Dale as highlights of show which had Hiram Sherman and Juanita Hall as masters of ceremonies. Mc Harry, News, found so many standouts in the line-up that he considered it unfair to name a few at the expense of others. Aston, WTS, is convinced that the country side is filled with talent, if the talent shown is an example. But he does wonder where the new writers are coming from to provide the fuel for this talent.

GIELGUD TOUR OPENS

Ages of Man- Stratford, Ontario 9/20. John Gielgud's one man show consisting of readings from George Ryland's anthology "Ages of Man" opened North American tour at Canadian Shakespeare Festival Theatre for a single performance. H. W. Times, noted that actor unfamiliar with the festival stage started slow and low, but by the time he had reached the third section of his program, the effect was over welming. The silvery thread of his voice held the audience enchained, leading it to planes of high emotion as well as of lofty poetic experience. The voice is light, but wonderfully flexible to the mind.

O"NEILL PLAY IN SWEDEN

Hughie , a one act play by Eugene O'Neill, presented at Royal Dramatic Theatre (9/17) is a two character play set in a sleazy Broadway hotel about 1928, reports Reuters. Play was first O'Neill drama bought by Stockholm Dramatic Theatre in 1922 but was never presented prior to current world premiere.

THEATRE BOOK COMMEN TS

"Bulwer and Macready", a selection of letters, diaries, notes, etc edited by Charles H Shattuck (U. of Ill Press $5.75) is a well illustrated, well presented volume on the 19th century playwright and actor, rated Rodo, Variety. Principally for the stage library.

" More in Sorrow" by Wolcott Gibbs (Holt $4) okayed by Krutch, Times, who noted that the selection of Gibbs' parodies, profiles, short stories and drama reviews are unified by a personality, a style and an attitude all of which are singularly consonant with one another. "Derisive", not rancourous and not overtly bitter.

LONDON STAGE VIEWS

50th anniversary of British repertory saluted by "Stage" editorial. Many a dramatist of today first attracts attention through repertory productions. Nine actors out of every ten must have gained early experience on the repertory boards. It is the first obvious step for the fully-fledged student who leaves the academy of dramatic art in search of practical experience. The repertory theatre brings him face to face with the man-in-the street and provides him with a challenge. Can he make an audience laugh or cry at will? If not, the sooner he leaves the stage the better both for himself and the playgoer.

It is dangerous for the actor to stay too long, especially in weekly repertory, which imposes a terrific strain upon even the hardiest of youngmen and women, British trade publication continues. There is no opportunity of being able to study a new part from the roots in less than a week: the best an actor can hope to do is to create a facade of a character by means of technical tricks and a facility for mental photography. Three years is the limit any artist should stay in repertory, and even then he is wise if he moves from theatre to theatre during the period, to accustom himself to different producers and different working conditions.

OUT OF TOWN

Atlantic City--Make A million... Baltimore- Look Back in Anger... Boston- Drink To Me Only, Goldilocks, A Touch of the Poet... Chicago-Mask and Gown, Auntie Mame, My Fair Lady.... Cleveland-Can-Can... Detroit-Romanoff and Juliet ...Los Angeles-Auntie Mame with Eve Arden, The Music Man ...Philadelphia-Once More With Feeling, World of Suzie Wong, Handful of Fire, Swim in the Sea... San Francisco- Marriage-Go Round.

Other pre Broadway tour plans include--Pleasure of His Company--New Haven Oct 1, Boston Oct 6... Patate- Atlantic City Oct 13, Philadelphia Oct 20... Marriage Go Round- Philadelphia Oct 15... Man in Dog Suit-Wilmington Sept 24, Washington Sept 29, Philadelphia Oct 13... Epitaph for George Dillon -Baltimore Oct 13, Atlantic City Oct 20... Comes A Day-Wilmington Oct 1, Philadelphia Oct 6, Boston Oct 20.